

[Written for the Indianapolis Sentinel.]
META WOODRUF.

By Mrs. Addie Detch Frank.

CHAPTER XXII.

Two days after Arthur's death there was to be another funeral at Woodruff Hall. God grant this may be the last for many years. His body was also to be taken to New York to be placed beside his father and mother. Lina had her revenge, but greater far than hers is the revenge of the Almighty. Mr. Woodruff and Meta accompanied the remains to the station, but were compelled to return home, as their presence there was needed.

Eugene returned home with the funeral party. When he said good-bye to Mr. Woodruff, before leaving the Hall, the latter was touched by the sad expression of his face. Eugene also said good-bye to Meta.

"Can you not forget and forgive the past, Meta?" he asked.

"I can forgive, but not forget," she answered.

"Think of what you are saying, Meta. Have you no word of hope for me?"

"I have nothing more to say to you now except that I wish you a long and happy life with the woman you have chosen to be your wife."

"Meta, I never intend to marry. Since I have seen you once more, I see how utterly impossible it is for me to ever marry another. Ah! now little you knew me and how little I knew myself until I came here. You can give me a life of happiness or a miserable existence."

"Why did you not think of this before you came up in the days when you knew I was watching, waiting and longing for one like or word from you?"

"I have sworn to you that I never failed to write to you until you ceased to answer my letters."

"Forgive me if I do wrong in saying I can not believe what you say. You believed in my guilt when Madam Rumer said I had deceived my father and friends; while the man, whose body lies in yonder room and who was nothing to me, believed in my innocence."

"Even if he had not, you loved him so devotedly that you could look over his faults."

"It was his great, pure and everlasting love for me which would not allow him to think evil of me."

"I see I need not expect either justice or mercy at your hands. Miss Woodruff, good-bye, and the parting was over."

How her heart ached; how she wished she could tell him her secret; yet she would not because she had doubted her sincerity, and who knew but what he might do the same after they were married. No, she would bear her great burden in silence, for she could not, would not marry a man who had no more faith in her than Eugene Hay had. She would try to drown her misery in work, in studying, in her father's happiness, and try to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and afflicted.

Life at Woodruff Hall seemed dull and gloomy. February had passed by and the first of March came roaring in like a lion. Spring was fast approaching. Spring came spring, with her soft balmy air, her gentle rains and wild flowers. Who is not glad to see this glorious season approaching after a long, cold winter?

No one had entered the room in which the terrible tragedy was committed until a week or more after the funeral. Meta ordered the carpet, which was dyed with blood of the unfortunate victims, removed from the room. In order to do this it was necessary to first remove the furniture. Meta stood by while each piece was carried out. The bedclothing was being removed from the bed, when to Meta's surprise a large bundle of paper fell to the floor, and upon unwrapping the outside paper, a bundle of letters was disclosed bearing a familiar handwriting, which she at once recognized as Eugene's, and her own. They had all been torn open. Where could they have come from and how did they get there? Could Eugene have placed them there?

Meta carried them down to the library to her father, who was as much puzzled as she as to how they got into the folds of the bedclothing.

"Eugene must have brought them with him and hid them until he should find an opportunity to give them to you," Mr. Woodruff said.

"I think you are wrong, papa, for see, my letters have never been stamped. The truth of the matter is, they never left Woodruff Hall."

"You are right, Meta, yet who could have placed them there? and of what value could they have been to anyone except Eugene?"

"God alone knows. Only think of the injustice I have done Eugene; he, the man I love above all others."

"You may have wronged him in refusing to believe he had written to you; but, child, do not allow that to worry you, for he did you a greater wrong than that. You both had cause to distrust each other. I hope this may some day be forgotten and you will make each other happy."

How strange it sounds to hear you talk so for well once to remember that Eugene asked your consent to our marriage, how you refused, and oh! how sad it was to part with him," said Meta.

"Child, I was angry that day at the way in which you treated—your knowledge who I mean. I soon saw, however, the folly of my actions. Meta, I am able to say to you that which many fathers would hesitate in saying to their daughters. Whatever you wish to do to promote your happiness, do. I have no fear of your doing wrong after the trials and temptations you have passed through."

"Thank you, dear papa. As to my happiness—"

"The entrance of Flo put an end to the conversation for the present."

"Mr. Woodruff, hear me a letter I dressed to you, as on course it is a yo."

"Where did you get that?"

"In one of the books in that horrible room. I tell you what, sah, I am afraid on dat room. Sho as you is born, I see a ghost of some un dar."

"Nonsense, Flo; go finish your work, and if you find any more of any importance bring it to me," answered Mr. Woodruff, taking the letter from the shivering girl and breaking the seal.

"It is from Lina, written by her on the day of her death," and the great beads of cold perspiration stood on her forehead, and her hand trembled.

"Read it aloud, papa. I must hear what she had to say; for no doubt it is a full confession of her guilt."

After resting a few moments, to quiet his nerves, he read aloud the letter written to him by the one who in a short time she had done so was cold in the arms of death. The following are the contents:

"To my once loving husband: I am about to end this weary, wretched life of mine, but before I do so I must confess to you my sins. Never until this moment have I known what it was to love my husband. Now, when it is too late, I realize, to the fullest extent, that which I have lost. Dear Eugene, forgive me for addressing you thus; for you are so very dear to me now I will begin

my unpleasant task, by telling you of the man I loved and was betrothed to when I was a girl. As I intend for him to accompany me to that unknown world, there can be no harm in my telling you his name. It is Arthur Braden, the man to whom you have extended your friendship. I can not tell you how I loved him. God alone knows that, if there is such a being.

Arthur was very poor, therefore it was impossible for him to marry me then. He went abroad, and for years I waited for him to return and make me his wife until I had given up all hope. Then it was that you asked me to be your friend. I consented, because I was tired of the life I was compelled to live, and wanted a home of my own; some place to lay my head that I might know was not a place from which I might at any moment be discharged. After we were married and went abroad, we met Arthur in London, when he informed me of the large fortune left to him by an uncle, whose death had occurred only a few days before. At sight of him all the old love was awakened within my heart with renewed vigor. I could not endure to be separated from him for a moment.

"You will remember that you had not received a letter from home for several weeks; you became uneasy and wanted to return home. Meta did not write, but Dr. Grey did, telling you of her severe illness; but I, your wife, destroyed them; for Arthur was not ready to return home, and I did not want to return without him. Oh, my husband! say you forgive me for causing you so many wretched hours in those days which should have been so happy."

"After we returned home I made you believe I loved you, which I did to hide my relations with Arthur. Before we were married your daughter refused to accept my offer of friendship, and I resolved to have revenge, to make her suffer for her contempt of me. With this end in view I always treated her. And I have succeeded with that which pleased me most. I am almost afraid to tell you what I did to accomplish my purpose lest you curse me. Yet I can make no difference, since I will not be in existence when you receive this letter. This is what I did: I watched the mail and secured Eugene's letters, and not one of your daughter's letters was permitted to leave the Hall. I have saved them all. You will find them hidden in bedclothing in the room in which I am now imprisoned. I do not expect either of you to forgive me, dear Eugene; yet I would gladly kneel at your feet and ask it."

"My love for Arthur seemed to increase day by day, and I knew if I were free he would marry me; therefore I resolved to poison you in order to gain that desired freedom."

"But now I see I have failed. I have learned to love you in the last few days. I suppose it is because he tried to do right and live an honorable life. However, I was he who broke a loving heart, and I must have revenge; therefore I lead my own miserable existence I will send him on before."

"I find it a terrible thing, when approaching the end of life to have lived a life of wickedness; to have lived without believing in God or heaven. With this end in view I leave this world? I wish my faith in God and man had not been destroyed, for then I might die happy. The only consolation in death to me is the thought of escaping the prison, and the thought of being free from misery. But enough of this, yet I can not bear to say good-bye forever, but I must. Once more I ask you to forgive a sinful wretch like me if you can. Farewell, my noble husband, and may He, in Whom you have all faith, bless you with His most choice blessing."

"Your disowned and dishonorable wife, LINA MASON."

Mr. Woodruff arose from his chair and staggered and fell back, the great tears trickling down his cheeks. He thought of how that miserable woman must have suffered when she wrote that letter, with death staring her in the face. "What must her feelings have been when writing this letter? My blood boils at the thought of the wrong she has done you," he said, wiping away the tears.

"Never mind that, papa; I was a great deal to blame myself. For what? For trying her or not I should not have scorned her offer of friendship, as she, poor thing, was all alone in this wide world, without a friend except you and Arthur."

"Even that does not excuse the wrong she has done," he replied.

"Papa, it is not only because we failed to receive each other's letters that I will not marry him; you know the other reason, and can not help but think I am right."

"There would have been no doubt, no mistake in that matter. Had these letters been allowed to reach their owners, you may be right in not accepting him, yet think of the long, weary years before you."

"Have I not got you with me, dear papa?"

"Ah! I will not be with you always, and I know that in the end you will be alone, and my only child will be alone in this great world. Child, think well before you give up the man you love so devotedly, and whom, I am now convinced, can love none other but my Meta," he said, gravely.

"Papa, would you have me marry Eugene? Tell me, do not hesitate in saying yes if you wish it."

"That must be left to the dictates of your own heart."

"It is too late to talk of that now, as he and his cousin are to be married in another week, and of course the invitations are out by this time. There is nothing left for me now but work and—"

The door opened and Dr. Grey and Gertrude entered. Mr. Woodruff handed them Lina's letter, and as Gertrude read it her eyes filled with tears.

"The way of the transgressor is indeed hard. But uncle, you do forgive her I know, and you too, Meta, even though she has separated you and Eugene. You are young and there are perhaps many years of happiness in store for you yet. Uncle, may I retain this letter for a few days?"

"Certainly, and when you are through with it commit it to the flames," Mr. Woodruff answered.

"By the way, Meta, I have news for you. Hal has returned from Europe and his wife and mamma are coming down to spend a few weeks with us. He says he has a great surprise in store for us all."

"When do they arrive?" asked Meta.

"She was glad to hear of Hal's return home, yet she thought of the question he had asked her when she last saw him, and wondered if he had forgotten it, and would once more look upon her as his cousin only."

"To-morrow morning, and Meta you must lay aside your sad smile and once more be light hearted and gay as our Meta of old."

"Will you try to please your father, I never saw you so changed by marriage as Gertrude and yourself."

"In what way? Come, explain."

"You have grown younger instead of older, and Gertrude has actually become a gay, happy woman instead of the quiet, reserved creature she used to be."

Thus the conversation ran on from one topic to another, until it was time for Gertrude and her husband to return home. The entrance of these two happy people into Woodruff Hall was just what they needed most at that moment, and when they had gone Mr. Woodruff and his daughter both thought what a blessing it was to possess such true friends as they were.

Among the mail which left Dr. Grey's

home that evening was a letter addressed to Eugene Hay. We hope he will receive it. We know that it is a letter of great importance.

[CONTINUED TO MORROW]

SPECULATION IN CHICAGO.

The Markets, Like the Stone of Sisyphus, Only Boasted Up to Roll Down Again—Desperate Gambblers.

Special to the Sentinel.

CHICAGO, Jan. 31.—The markets on "Change" during the past week have again shown something of their old-time life and activity, but it has been at the expense of materially lower prices all around.

Wheat started weak and heavy, with Gyp Adams, Nat Jones and their followers selling freely, but the bulls manfully fought against any decline and countrymen, contrary to their usual custom, doubted their purchases at each fractional drop, encouraged by the belief that Tuesday's visible supply figures would show a decrease. This, however, they failed to do. In fact, they denoted that during the previous week supplies had increased something over a quarter million bushels, and the market broke out to pieces. In consequence, encouraged by this the bears have kept up a continuous pouring of orders since, and added by dumping on stop orders and the wing of weak bulls they have succeeded in pretty thoroughly demoralizing holders, and all but the strongest bulls have been shaken out. Prices have fluctuated sharply and widely, but each day touches a lower point than before reached and toward the finish the principal buying was by "shorts" covering at a profit. The outlook now too is not thought to favor much improvement and many are predicting lower prices. May have yet been recorded. The fact that the supply continues so large in spite of increased consumption again is a serious matter. That the stock of wheat in the country is yet very large. The weather is becoming milder and with the embargo on the railroads removed, much heavier shipments are being made. Prices are becoming sensational to check the enthusiasm of the bears, who are again becoming rampant in their conviction of the wisdom of low prices. With a long spell of warm weather to remove the covering of snow from the ground, unfavorable crop reports again are expected and will perhaps supply the stimulus needed to turn the market for another advance.

Mineral spirits to-day: "It is an uncertain kind of market, and will be difficult to ride successfully. I regard sales made on bulges or purchases made as standing about an equal chance of winning."

Another trader says: "The market is so heavily 'short' that it will be impossible to even up, without a big bulge, and that will not come until the growing crop would set things soaring."

When the feeling is weakest it is often just the time when some one is about to do a big thing. Kent is believed to be still under the market, and so are Baxter and Bliss.

Corn has been depressed on account of the restoration of freights East to the old pool rates, which was equivalent to a reduction of 2½c in the price paid for the grain. The general opinion seems to be that corn can go up much with wheat so heavy, and will not decline much with it, but for some reason it does not.

At the start hog products seemed inclined to advance under decreased receipts at the yards and the reported very heavy shipments of meat, but the weakness in surrounding markets proved too much for the boys, and provisions gave way in sympathy. Tallow and lard are heavy, but shows signs of letting up, so that with continued weakness in the cereals many expect a further decline in products of the farm.

Their cellars full and are interested in preventing any downward movement, while speculators have no vivid a remembrance of last year's experience to get heavily "short" on anything in the provision line.

Incurable Invalids.

Your peevish, fretful people are usually out of health. They lack vigor and digest ill. After all, though their peevishness is annoying, we should not be inconsiderate of its cause—feeble health. Their stomachs need tonics, their nerves require invigoration more than their bodies merit. A course of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, when they are induced to try it, does them more good than all the sedatives and opiates they are fond of taking for their "nerves." Nerves they are, not in fancy alone, but in reality, and nervous they will remain until they invigorate. Sound digestion is surely a blessing worth securing in itself, and its value is enhanced by the fact that through it nerve quietude is attainable. The Bitters conquer, besides dyspepsia, fever and ague, rheumatism, kidney and bladder troubles, and symptoms specially indicative of a disordered condition of the liver and bowels. Medical practitioners commend and administer it.

A Bold Robbery.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 31.—William Bender, Deputy Clerk of the Probate Court, was going through the Court-house this afternoon, on his way to the office from the bank, where he had cashed some checks, and was assaulted from behind and knocked senseless to the floor, and robbed of about \$500. No clue to the robbers.

Strong points about Mishler's Herb Bitters are so many that it is not possible to make a strong front rank among the household remedies, and absolutely defies competition. It cures kidney troubles, liver complaints, dyspepsia, and all bowel disorders, supplies tone to the stomach, reinvigorates the digestive organs, stimulates the secretions, promotes regular action of the bowels and enables every organ of the body to perform its allotted work.

Brigandage in Mexico.

CITY OF MEXICO, Jan. 31.—A valuable conveyance en route between Mexico and Cuernavaca, was attacked Wednesday evening by organized bandits. The escort was overpowering and the driver all captured. Government troops are now in pursuit of the robbers.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Combines, in a manner peculiar to itself, the best blood-purifying and strengthening remedies of the vegetable kingdom. You will find this wonderful remedy effective where other medicines have failed. Try it now. It will purify your blood, regulate the digestion, and give new life and vigor to the entire body.

"Hood's Sarsaparilla did me great good. I was tired out from overwork, and it toned me up." Mrs. G. E. SIMMONS, Cohoes, N. Y.

"I suffered three years from blood poison. I took Hood's Sarsaparilla and it cured me." Mrs. M. J. DAVIS, Brockport, N. Y.

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"Hood's Sarsaparilla beats all others, and is worth its weight in gold." J. BARRINGTON, 130 Bank Street, New York City.

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Right to the point

The Rev. J. E. Searies, of New York, is one of the most widely-known and highly esteemed of Methodist ministers.

Mr. Searies says: "I am impressed that it is a duty I owe to those afflicted with Rheumatism or Neuralgia, to say that a remedy has been discovered that is indeed a marvelous success. My son was greatly afflicted with Rheumatism, and suffered so severely that he was unable to move. He was in bed, and I was in despair. I had tried every remedy I could find, but nothing seemed to give him any relief. While in this condition he discovered a remedy which effected immediate relief, and a permanent cure. He has since furnished it to many others with the same result. I have supplied figures would show a decrease. This, however, they failed to do. In fact, they denoted that during the previous week supplies had increased something over a quarter million bushels, and the market broke out to pieces. In consequence, encouraged by this the bears have kept up a continuous pouring of orders since, and added by dumping on stop orders and the wing of weak bulls they have succeeded in pretty thoroughly demoralizing holders, and all but the strongest bulls have been shaken out. Prices have fluctuated sharply and widely, but each day touches a lower point than before reached and toward the finish the principal buying was by 'shorts' covering at a profit. The outlook now too is not thought to favor much improvement and many are predicting lower prices. May have yet been recorded. The fact that the supply continues so large in spite of increased consumption again is a serious matter. That the stock of wheat in the country is yet very large. The weather is becoming milder and with the embargo on the railroads removed, much heavier shipments are being made. Prices are becoming sensational to check the enthusiasm of the bears, who are again becoming rampant in their conviction of the wisdom of low prices. With a long spell of warm weather to remove the covering of snow from the ground, unfavorable crop reports again are expected and will perhaps supply the stimulus needed to turn the market for another advance."

What Mr. Corbit Says:

"New Haven, July 24, 1882. 'Mr. Searies: Dear Sir,—I wish to say for the benefit of all who are suffering with Rheumatism or Neuralgia, that your medicine is infallible. I suffered for two months the most excruciating torture; lost 30 pounds of flesh, and was not out of my house for a month. I heard of your remedy, and was almost instantly relieved by it. If there is a specific for disease of any kind, yours is certainly so for Rheumatism or Neuralgia in its severest form. Yours most respectfully, W. CORBIT, 'Pastor George St. M. E. Church, New Haven, Conn.'"

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If you cannot get ATROPHOROS of your druggist, we will send you a receipt on receipt of regular price—one dollar per bottle. We prefer that you buy it from your druggist, but if he has not it, do not be persuaded to try something else, but order at once from us as directed.

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